

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12
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O 062342Z SEP 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3217
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 03478

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, UNGA, PQ, TZ
SUBJECT: PUERTO RICO IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24

1. AMBASSADOR YOUNG ACCOMPANIED BY MISOFF CALLED ON
TANZANIAN UN PERM REP SALIM SEPTEMBER 6 TO DISCUSS
PUERTO RICO. SALIM WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS DEPUTY
AMBASSADOR SEBASTIAN CHALE AND COUNSELLOR FATUMA TATU NURU.

2. SALIM IN RESPONDING TO QUERY CONCERNING CURRENT
SITUATION ON PUERTO RICO IN C-24 SAID HE HAD POSTPONED
ACTION LAST WEEK AS AN ACCOMODATION FOR THE U.S. DUE
TO ITS CONCURRENT INVOLVEMENT ON NAMIBIA. AS COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN HE WILL AVOID INITIATIVES WHICH COULD BE
INTERPRETED AS FAVORATISM BY ONE SIDE OR ANOTHER. HIS
EXPERIENCE HAD SHOWN THAT WHENEVER THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
TRIES TO ACT IN A POSITIVE WAY EVERYONE JUMPS ON HIM.
TANZANIA'S POSITION IN THE PAST HAD BEEN TO VOTE FOR
RESOLUTIONS ON PUERTO RICO BUT IT HAD NEVER TAKEN AN
ACTIVE ROLE ON THE ISSUE. HIS GOAL NOW WAS TO TRY TO
FORESTALL A NOISY CONFRONTATION.

3. CONCERNING THE CUBAN/IRAQ RESOLUTION, MANY PEOPLE
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HAVE PROBLEMS WITH IT. THIS IS BECAUSE IT HAS SO MUCH
IN IT, INCLUDING DEFINITIONS OF STATUS. EVEN THE CUBANS
DO NOT CONSIDER THE RESOLUTION TO BE "THEIR CUP OF TEA".
THIS WAS BECAUSE IT CONTAINED PET THEMES OF VARIOUS
PUERTO RICAN GROUPS, PARTICULARLY THE INDEPENDISTAS
AND THE COMMONWEALTH SUPPORTERS.

4. IF AMENDMENTS ARE SUBMITTED THIS AFTERNOON (SEPT. 6)
--AS HE UNDERSTANDS WILL HAPPEN-- THEN THERE WOULD
PROBABLY BE NO VOTE TODAY. THE VOTE WOULD COME SEPT. 7
OR 8.

5. THE SIGNIFICANT THING IS THAT DESPITE ITS PROBLEMS,
THE RESOLUTION BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ENJOYS CONSIDERABLE
SUPPORT. ALMOST ALL OF THE 40 PLUS SPEAKERS FROM
PUERTO RICO SAID THAT PUERTO RICO DOES NOT NOW ENJOY
COMPLETE SELF-GOVERNMENT. THEIR APPEARANCE AND STATEMENTS
HAVE CHANGED THE SITUATION APPRECIABLY FROM PREVIOUS
YEARS. SOME RESOLUTION WOULD PASS.

6. SALIM SAID THAT MOST UN MEMBERS CONSIDERED PUERTO RICO
TO BE A MINOR ISSUE. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HE SAID THAT
IT APPEARED THAT IF THE ISSUE WAS PUT BEFORE THE
PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE TODAY THEY WOULD GO FOR STATEHOOD.
THAT WOULD NOT BOTHER HIM.

7. THE ONLY REASON THAT PUERTO RICO HAD BECOME A CON-
TENTIOUS ISSUE IN THE COMMITTEE WAS THE U.S. GOVERN-
MENT'S EQUIVOCATION ON THE ISSUE. THE U.S. SHOULD ASSURE
THAT THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN PUERTO RICO EVOLVES.
ALL THE UN NEEDS IS TO BE ASSURED THAT THE U.S. IS
PROCEEDING FAIRLY. IF THE U.S. WOULD APPEAR TO BE
EXTENDING SERIOUS COOPERATION TO THE UN
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AND SHOW PROGRESS IN RESOLVING THE PUERTO RICAN SITUATION,
THE USG'S PROBLEM IN THE UN OVER THIS ISSUE WOULD
DISAPPEAR. BY FIGHTING THE MATTER EACH YEAR, THE U.S.
"AS IN THE DEBATE OVER CHINA" WOULD KEEP LOSING SUPPORT.
PUERTO RICO IS A MOST UNIQUE CASE. ALL SIDES INSIST
ON GIVING THEIR OWN INTERPRETATIONS. HE NOTED THAT
SINCE 1972 THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE HAD BEEN RAISED AND
DISCUSSED IN THE C-24. THEREFORE, IN A WAY, THE UN
WAS ALREADY SEIZED WITH THE MATTER. THE U.S. SHOULD
FACE THIS SITUATION SQUARELY.

8. AMBASSADOR YOUNG DESCRIBED THE U.S. OBJECTIONS TO
HAVING THE UN DEAL WITH THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE. THE
PROBLEMS WERE BOTH TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL. A UN
RESOLUTION COULD MAKE HANDLING OF THE ISSUE WITHIN THE
USG MORE DIFFICULT. IT COULD ALSO CAUSE A REACTION
AGAINST THE UN BY CONSERVATIVE POLITICIANS AND CERTAIN
SECTORS OF THE U.S. PUBLIC. CUBA'S IDENTIFICATION WITH
THE ISSUE FURTHER COMPLICATED MATTERS. HE HOPED THAT A
WAY MIGHT BE FOUND TO AVOID CONFRONTATION BY FINDING
A FORMULA FOR REACHING A CONSENSUS MORE OR LESS SATIS-
FACTORY TO EVERYONE.

9. SALIM SAID HE HOPED THAT WOULD BE POSSIBLE. HE WANTED TO AVOID ANY EMBARRASSMENT FOR THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. HE ALSO THOUGHT THE CUBANS --DESPITE THEIR PRINCIPLED APPROACH TO THE ISSUE-- WANTED TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION. HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE CUBANS WANTED TO HAVE THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE BROUGHT UP IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THERE WERE ENOUGH IMPORTANT ISSUES WITHOUT HAVING DISRUPTION CAUSED BY THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE. THE CUBANS WOULD BE CONTENT WITH A SHORT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3218

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

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HE ADDED THAT THE "LESS FUSS YOU MAKE, THE BETTER IT WILL BE". SALIM PLEDGED TO DO HIS BEST TO AVOID HAVING THE UNGA DEAL WITH PUERTO RICO AND AGAIN ASKED THAT THE U.S. NOT "BLOW UP" THE ISSUE. YOUNG

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